

The Trojitá Handbook

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Abstract

Trojitá is an email program ("client") for IMAP accounts. It is a stand-alone program not associated with any Information Suites or equivalent. It prioritizes efficient and fast data transfer, taking care not to re-download any information that has already been downloaded, and being conservative about network usage when you are paying by the minute. Currently under intensive development, it is lacking some features but is evolving fast.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Trojitá is an email program (“client”) focused on IMAP email accounts, where the mail remains on the server but is manipulated by the software you run on the computer under your fingertips. It is designed to be simple (it can be built using only one single dependent library), and fast and efficient over the network, economizing resources and limiting data transfer. Its GUI is intended to be uncluttered and efficient, and it provides “expensive mode” data transfer, that reduces the length of its conversation with the server to a minimum. It is a stand-alone program, not part of a bigger or more complex suite. As it is under development, some features are still missing.

Chapter 2

Using Trojitá

Trojitá allows you to read, write, organize, search for, and send email. If you've got an IMAP email account, Trojitá will allow you to access and use it. IMAP is a protocol that allows your mail to stay on the server, rather than downloading it to your local machine. However, Trojitá does in fact download parts of your messages – even all of your messages – for convenience. In the 1990s, most people used POP3 mailboxes, and their email software downloaded all their messages, removing them from the server. The disadvantage was that if you used any other computer, your messages were not available. IMAP solves that problem by keeping the mail on the server. The software you use on your local computer/cellphone simply issues instructions (“reply to this email,” “display this email,” etc.) for the server to execute.

First you need an IMAP account. There are many providers; [FastMail](#) is one; [Tuffmail](#) and [Pobox](#) are others. Google's Gmail service provides IMAP access to your Gmail account (Outlook and others do not). And if the manager of your Microsoft® Exchange server has configured it, you can access Exchange through IMAP as well. If you have got an IMAP account, a user name and password, that is all you should need to use Trojitá to access it.

Note that not all IMAP providers are equal and some offer service that is frustratingly slow. Microsoft®'s Exchange server too is reported to be somewhat slow. If you choose a good provider and use fast software, you'll be surprised how pleasant an experience it can be.

2.1 Configuring your IMAP Account

First, click on the **General** tab of the Settings box. Add your IMAP account as a new account, using these parameters:

- Real Name: the name you want to show on your emails (your own first and last name)
- Email: your email address
- Organisation: your company name (optional)
- Signature: any text you want to appear at the bottom of your emails, like your website name or a slogan

These settings become an identity, and you can have several, if you want, if for example, some of your mail is part of a mailing list where your messages should look different (a different signature line, for example). Note however that at present, Trojitá does not yet permit multiple IMAP accounts (that is, use with multiple servers).

Next, add the connection parameters necessary to access your account.

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- Method: choose SSL, if your provider requires it. Otherwise, choose “TCP” for a connection that starts unencrypted and may be upgraded to encryption while connecting. And if your provider requires you to perform that upgrade to encryption, check the “perform STARTTLS command” to ensure it does. “Local process” is for advanced users who, for example, are connecting to their provider over another SSH agent (in this case you’d put something like `ssh imap.provider.org dovecot --exec-mail imap`). Generally, TCP or SSL are your two most likely choices.
- IMAP Server: is your provider’s server (e.g. mail.host.com)
- Port: this parameter should change automatically depending on what you enter for “IMAP Server.” Typically it is 143 for unencrypted connections and 993 for SSL connections.
- Username: your username
- Password: your password. At present, Trojitá stores your user name and password in a plain text file on your computer. This is not secure! If that worries you, leave the password field blank, and Trojitá will ask you once for your password, and keep it in memory until the application exits.
- Start in Offline Mode:
- Blacklisted Capabilities: Trojitá strives to be standards compliant. But some servers that advertise standards compliance are not actually so. If you’re aware of some features that your provider advertises but does not actually provide, listing them here allows Trojitá to politely ignore them.

The **Offline** mode tab is where you configure Trojitá’s ability to store local copies of messages on your server. The advantage of saving a copy locally is obvious: you can access it later without reconnecting. The disadvantages include filling up your local hard disk, and of course the security risk if anyone ever goes exploring on your computer. Trojitá’s default is to store local copies indefinitely, but here you may choose if you prefer to store up to a certain number of days, or to not store at all. Note that the code to clean the message cache has not yet been implemented, so at present you should assume the message cache will not be pruned.

The **SMTP** tab is where you configure sending email.

- Method: choose SMTP for unencrypted connections, or “secure SMTP” if you prefer (and your provider accepts) mail sent over SSL. If you choose “local sendmail-compatible” Trojitá will simply pass your mail to the sendmail app running on your local computer (and if you haven’t got one, it will fail). Choosing this option requires you specify the sendmail parameters for using your local sendmail.
- SMTP server: the name of the server to which your mail should be sent.
- Port: This parameter should change automatically depending on what you choose for “Method.” Typically, it’s 587 for unencrypted mail, and 465 for mail sent over SSL.
- Sendmail Executable: is only required if you’ve chosen “local sendmail-compatible” as your method. If so, here you should put whatever command is required for your message to be sent to your local sendmail app. The default is “sendmail -bm -oi” but if your local configuration is non-standard, you’ll have to adjust this parameter appropriately.
- StartTLS: check this box if your provider requires a TLS connection to send encrypted mail (this is not the same as using SSL by choosing “Secure SMTP” as your method above).
- SMTP Auth: if you must input a user name and password in order to send mail, check this box. In the modern age, you almost always have to do so, as otherwise spammers send unwanted messages through the server.
- Username: your user name.
- Your password.

- Save outgoing mail: if you check this box, Trojitá will save a copy of every mail you send. This has been the default setting for all email programs for so long now that few people even know it's possible to not do so!
- Sent folder name: If you do decide to keep a local copy of your sent mail, choose in which folder you'd like to keep it.
- Send with BURL: The BURL extension is an extension to the IMAP standard, implemented in 2006, so not all servers make the service available. Imagine you have a huge email in your inbox with an attachment, and you'd like to forward that message. The normal way requires your IMAP client to download that huge message, and then resend it (causing two large network transfers). The BURL extension allows you to send that message without having to download it first. If your provider permits BURL, it's worth selecting this option.

2.2 Reading Mail with Trojitá

Trojitá presents a three paned interface that should be anyone who has ever used email before. On the left side is a list of all your email folders, probably INBOX and some others. On the right side are two panes: the top pane shows the list of all messages in the current folder, and the bottom pane shows the message selected in the top pane. Microsoft® Outlook, KMail and many other email clients all use this same layout.

Other layouts are available, however. Under the **View** menu, simply select **Layout** → **Wide** to choose instead a three pane layout suitable for larger, wider screens, where your folders are shown in the left column, the messages of the selected folder in the center column, and the contents of the selected message in the right column.

When you select a message, it will be displayed below. Right click on the selected message in the top pane if you'd like to delete the message, save it to disk as a text file, or view all the headers.

To respond to, or forward a message, use the buttons on the toolbar, as no keystroke shortcuts are currently defined. Choose **Private Reply** to respond only to the sender. Choose **Reply to All** if you'd like to reply to the sender and everyone else on the To: or CC: lines. If the message arrived through a properly-configured mailing list, the **Reply to Mailing List** option will also be made available.

NOTE

At present, the "Forward message" function has not yet been included.

2.3 Writing/Composing Mail

To compose a new message, click the icon at the far left of the toolbar. A new message window will appear, where you can choose your recipients, compose your text, and send. If you get interrupted and need to save a draft, you can do so by clicking on the little expander menu next to the send button. A draft will then be saved in your drafts folder.

2.4 Address Book

At present, Trojitá does not have a graphical addressbook, though one is actively being developed. However, in the meantime, there's a very effective work-around. Upon start up, Trojitá reads the address book located in `~/ .abook/`, which you can create using the console-only program called `abook`. Running `abook` in a terminal window like `Konsole`, you can add, delete, and edit address book entries. Trojitá doesn't manipulate that address book in any way, so for example, it won't add new entries as you write messages. But if you've got an `.abook` address book, Trojitá will auto-complete entries using it.

Chapter 3

Command Reference

3.1 The main Trojitá window

3.1.1 The IMAP Menu

IMAP → Compose Mail...

Opens a new message for editing

IMAP → Expunge Mailbox (Ctrl+E)

Removes from the server any message already marked for deletion in the currently selected mailbox (folder).

Network Access → Offline

If selected, Trojitá will not fetch any new data (messages) from your server and will rather limit itself to the messages you have previously downloaded. (It will still let you compose new messages, however, even though you won't be able to send them).

Network Access → Expensive Connection

Use this if you're using Trojitá on a cell-phone or other device where it's important to reduce network traffic and be efficient.

Network Access → Free Access

Use this if you are on a desktop computer with unlimited broadband internet access. This permits Trojitá to more aggressively preload data. That is, instead of just downloading headers, for example, it will go right ahead and download a local copy of the messages, too.

3.1.2 The View Menu

View → Layout

Choose **Wide** for a modern, three-panel view with the message list in the center and the message itself on the right. Choose **Compact** for the traditional three panel view with the message list on top and the message itself on the bottom.

View → Show Messages in Threads

Select this option to show messages grouped into threads (conversations). This is useful for mailing lists, for example. This depends on your IMAP server supporting one or more voluntary extensions, as Trojitá would otherwise have to do more work to properly thread messages.

View → Hide Read Messages

Choose this option if you like only new messages to appear in the message list.

View → Show Only Subscribed Folders

Your mailbox may have more folders than you actually need to monitor. Select this option to limit the folders shown to only those you've subscribed to. (This doesn't delete the other folders, it just prevents them from being shown in the list of folders).

Chapter 4

Credits and License

Trojitá

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